

The Holy Quran in 3D Virtual Reality

Of the many wonderful texts found under the umbrella of Islamic literature, whether esoteric or otherwise, there is a very short little passage that one can sometimes come across within the folds of the sermons and letters of Nahj al-Balagha, one of the greatest books ever written in Shia Islam.

That passage is:

....فَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِآيَةٍ فِيهَا تَشْوِيقٌ رَكَنُوا إِلَيْهَا طَمَعًا وَتَطَلَّعَتْ نُفُوسُهُمْ إِلَيْهَا شَوْقًا وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهَا نُسَبُّ أَعْيُنُهُمْ وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِآيَةٍ فِيهَا تَخْوِيفٌ أَصْغَوْا إِلَيْهَا مَسَامِعَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّ رَقِيرَ جَهَنَّمَ وَشَهيقَهَا فِي أُصُولِ آذَانِهِمْ....

Taken as an excerpt from the sermon called خطبة المتقين The Sermon (of the Traits of) The Pious, in this passage, the Amir ع, while giving his description of the qualities and characteristics of pious people, mentions a particular trait that these people have which gives them an advantage over all others who are not like them, despite all those other people also having the ability to read the Holy Quran just as well. As we take a look at what that trait is, it will also become clear how that trait empowers pious people for success in both the afterlife, and also in this life, too.

In this passage, the Amir ع says the following is what happens when pious people read the Holy Quran:

....When they happen upon a verse which describes [something enthralling and joyful], they pause and [develop a sense of intrigue and eagerness] from what they have just read and picture it happening [so clearly in their minds], that it is as if they are seeing it happen directly with their very eyes. When they happen upon a verse which describes [something frightening], they wholeheartedly give it their full attention, and begin to picture [in their minds] the horrors that are being described to the point that it is as if they can hear the terrifying hellish sounds with their very ears...

The significance of the Amir ع's explanation is threefold:

First, as mentioned already, it describes the characteristic way in which pious people read the Holy Quran.

Second, when looked at closely, the Amir ع is actually providing guidance on not just how to properly read and understand the Holy Quran, but how to also do it in a way that provides maxim benefits: the Holy Quran should never be read as fast as possible, only paying attention to the melody of the recitation; The way in which one reads the holy verses should make the mind of the reader turn those verses into a virtual 3D reality experience.

Third, based on the point above, as the one reading the Holy Quran gets better and better at turning the verses that they read, which are essentially just words in a sentence, into a 3D virtual reality in their mind, and eventually train and condition their brains to do this effortlessly by re-reading the Holy Quran over and over again, they will become empowered for success not just in the afterlife, but in this life as well.

In terms of achieving success in the afterlife by reading the Holy Quran, this is a “no-brainer” because it is clear that, after having read what Allah س wants us to do and what He س wants us to not do, we will change our lifestyle to fit and to follow the standards that Allah س has set and made clear based on the verses of the Holy Quran.

And, we know and understand that, by changing our ways and bringing them in line with Allah س's wishes, that He س will consider us winners, and count us amongst His س friends whom He س will allow to live forever in paradise, and to whom he will provide an endless and great reward in the afterlife, inshallah. As for the other point about how reading the Holy Quran, in the way shown by the Amir ع, and how it empowers us for success in this life, we first need to look into what counts as and is considered success in this life.

Success in this life, over many generations leading up to now, to our present time, has for us become defined and tied together with getting a good education. In our present age, by the time we grow up and go from our mid-teens into our early twenties, the societies that we live in expect us to get a good education. The reason they put a lot of emphasis on it is so that, at later stages in our lives, we will be better able to deal with any difficult situations we have to face, and solve them quickly and easily for ourselves.

For example, the problem that fresh water resources will diminish significantly world-wide, and the problem that food resources will become very limited in the not-so-far future are situations that will have to be dealt with in simple and efficient ways in the years to come. Just really how simple and efficient a way to deal with these issues is found depends on just how good an education we get right now. But for the moment at hand, for right now, before life becomes too complicated, what we need to do is to study, study, and study. So, how is reading the Holy Quran going to help us out with this?

Reading the Holy Quran, in the way shown by the Amir ξ , in terms of education, provides a very effective strategy for making our brains sharper, and our communication more clear and effective. This is because, once we have the ability to read written text and turn it into a clear virtual 3D experience in our mind for ourselves, the next skill becomes to go the other way and put that clear virtual 3D picture from inside our mind into just words on a paper in a short, and clear paragraph. That is what effective communication is and that is what it means: The ability to read written words and see them as a picture in the mind, and also to turn the pictures we see in our minds back into words in a short and sweet way; Sharp minds and effective communication just happen to be the two most basic and important traits that all education aims to enable and hone in a student.

In every class from grade 1 to a PhD level seminar, there are always going to be one or two students that perform at a below-average level, and one or two students that perform at an above-average level, while the rest of the group falls between these two extremes, and is considered average-level. We may have wondered: why is it always like this in every class?, and what is the secret advantage that the above-average level students have over all others that make things always work out for them, in terms of them getting great marks and lots of awards, while it is not the case for others?

If we ask them about it, and pay close attention to what they say, we will find that, although they may not be able to find the right words to tell us just how they do it, they do have an inborn skill that lets them picture what they read clearly in their minds, and also to put it in the form of crisp and clear text back onto paper. And they have the marks to prove it! This is just how what the Amir ξ is describing works, and it is what helps to unlock the potential of those pious people: it gives them the ability to sharpen their minds and to communicate more effectively.

So, at the end of the day, it really does not matter what the subject is that is being taught, or what the major program of study or specialization is, or if it is a certificate or degree program, or anything else like that. The main point is that, if someone wants to get high grades in their classes, regardless of whatever the subject matter in that class happens to be, they need to clearly understand what their teacher is saying, and then to communicate it back to their teacher in a clear and concise way to prove to that teacher they have understood what that teacher said. And it also does not matter how good or how bad a teacher actually is at teaching. Lots of people complain that their teachers suck, and that they cannot teach for beans to even make the slightest of sense of anything, despite that subject being in the teacher's field of expertise.

But none of any of that matters at the end of the day because, if the Amir ξ 's technique is followed in the proper way, all of those complaints and frustrations will just get brushed aside as a direct result of how empowered one will become for having trained themselves to turn just words from a sentence into a 3D virtual reality in their mind and having refined this trait by reading the Holy Quran. Once a good level of proficiency is achieved in properly reading the Holy Quran, there will not remain any text or subject that

will be out of the reach of one's understanding for anyone any more. It will all become easy-peasy, no matter what is thrown at a mind that has sharpened itself using the light of the Holy Quran, inshallah. This is because, if one can understand and visualize Allah's glorious word, the most perfect and unparalleled form of literature available, then no other text will ever present as much of a challenge because it is far below in quality when compared to the Holy Text.

So go ahead and pick up the Holy Quran, and read it in the way Imam Ali ؑ has shown, it will help in becoming successful in both the afterlife, and in this life, too, inshallah.

Wishing all the sisters and the brothers a very happy day of Eid celebrations on the birth anniversary of The Commander of the Faithful, Amir al-Momineen, Imam Ali ؑ, and success in all endeavours, always.

Your brother in faith,

SMH Razvi
Rajab 13, 2020

Was Salam